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the individual legislative independence of the federating States which it implies, not because peoples may be unwilling to curtail power of their own governments to plunge them into international ventures without their consent, but because any power of coercion possessed by the executive authority of the federated States would entail extension of the very power in question in each individual State which it is sought to restrict and release from that legislative control which is now universally acknowledged to be inherent to the possession of political freedom." This, though not quite a logical dilemma, is as nearly a complete refutation of the general argument for a Society of Nations as anything that has been propounded; it is the practical difficulty in its most general form. Though the dictum is merely a criticism, and is not intended as the final answer to the question upon which it is based, it in itself goes far toward justifying what is in effect the point of view of the whole treatise, not only as to the remaking of the map but as to the reconstitution of the political system: "Preference should be given, *ceteris paribus*, and where it works without violent resistance, to the *status quo*."

Sir Thomas's comments and queries in regard to the details of the Society of Nations and in regard to President Wilson's Fourteen Points are acute—the truth being that these provisions and these points greatly need definition.

DEMOCRACY. By Shaw Desmond. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

The general point of view of this story—as ultimately and somewhat tardily expressed—seems to be, that "Democracy is bigger than Syndicalism—it is bigger even than Socialism—it is the biggest, the most certain thing in the world—it is Evolution itself with the Will behind." In a sense, this conclusion is certainly true—it is even somewhat obvious. The use, however, of the term "bigger" and of the phrase "the Will behind" makes the statement somewhat ambiguous. The author does not say, it will be observed, that Democracy, as against Syndicalism or Socialism, is certain to have in the long run the support of men's consciences and of their sober judgments, but that it is "the biggest thing in the world," an irresistible power, a force of nature, as it were, "with the Will behind."

As a matter of fact, what the story seems to prove, so far as it proves anything, is not that Syndicalism is unjust, or faulty in conception, and not that the appeal of Syndicalism, as illustrated in the moral and emotional development of a real man, is sophistical; but rather that "direct action," as carried out in the career of a somewhat romantic, unreal, and puppet-like character, is sure to be a failure. Organized society is stronger than Syndicalism—this would seem to be the lesson. It is a lesson in force purely—one which takes on a spiritual aspect only in so far as we are impressed by the suggestion that the inevitable defeat of the Syndicalist movement is due to the superior bigness of democracy and to "the Will behind."

And so, when one regards its whole tone, the story seems to be quite as much a plea for the Syndicalist point of view as a defense of Democracy in the sense that Democracy is an expression of reason.

The author seems to sympathize more fully with his hero in his romantic vagaries than in his late and somewhat ambiguous conversion. The experiences of a hero whose emotions are "cosmic," who makes himself "the Jesus Christ of the anti-militarist movement," who calls upon organized labor, during the war, to see that the real enemy is within, and not without, the gates, are not likely to throw much light upon the theory of democracy unless these are treated in an extremely critical spirit. And though "Destin" eventually changes his mind in the course of this story, a sequel is really needed to prove his sanity.

But far more than it is the development of any view of life or bent of character, the novel is a romantic melodrama. "Destin" is simply the romantic young man of the period, in search of something "big" to worship—something big enough to include all the demands of his hypertrophied personality. "Creegan," his chief, whose tragic end is the culminating point of the narrative, is a megalomaniac, who through his insane sincerity and his gigantic gestures is designed to give dignity to a lost cause—a cause that deserved to fail, not really because it was not big enough, but because it was wrong.

The melodramatic tone prevails throughout the story. Nearly all the noteworthy characters in it are men with terrible jaws and fearsome eyes. The public men are persons of inordinately strong personality, who seldom do anything decisive; terrific tongue-lashers, mordant ironists, who never say anything that it would be worth while to quote.

On the whole, *Democracy* will scarcely satisfy any but those romantic souls who can find something impressive in the fore-ordained collapse (uncritically described) of visionary hopes, or see something hugely significant and grandly tragic in the (literal) crucifixion of a headstrong enthusiast.